

Chrysotis, *Ara*, *Priotelus*, *Geotrygon*, *Hadrostromus*, and others, which are all quite foreign to the Nearctic avifauna, while *Corvus* is almost the only noticeable form common to the Antilles and United States which does not extend into South America.

The species of birds peculiar to Cuba are considered by Dr. Gundlach to be 40 in number. Looking through his list we should make them out to be 43, an extraordinarily large proportion out of a total of 257 species. No less than five genera are restricted to the island, namely *Teretistis*, *Melopyrrha*, *Niphiidopicus*, *Priotelus*, and *Sturnelas*. All these, except the first, are monotypic, *Teretistis* alone consisting of two representative species, one inhabiting the western and the other the eastern districts of the island. The most noticeable Antillean forms, *i. e.* common to Cuba and the other Antilles, but not found elsewhere, are *Gymnoglanx*, *Mimocichla*, *Spindalis*, *Saurothera*, and *Todus*, besides many sections of widely diffused genera, such as the group of Parrots allied to *Chrysotis leucocephala*, and the *Icteri* akin to *T. hypomelas*.

We may regard the ornithology of Cuba as now pretty fairly worked out, although there are doubtless still discoveries to be made among the *Tyrannidae* and more obscure groups. There is, however, a great lack of specimens of Cuban birds in European collections generally, the Berlin Museum alone containing anything like a complete set; and we trust that Dr. Gundlach will set about distributing series of his new species in various quarters, and endeavour to make his interesting discoveries more widely known.

XXII.—*Letters, Extracts from Correspondence, Notices, &c.*

WE have received the following letters addressed "To the Editor of the 'The Ibis'":—

Epsom, Auckland, New Zealand,
11th January, 1867.

SIR,—I have been away, making a geological excursion in the Waikato, and have just returned, or I should have written before. . . . The *Apteryx* is not rare here in the thickly-wooded primary slate masses, but is seldom heard, and never seen except

when hunted. I had the pleasure of hearing one one night: the natives told me that it was a male; so I suppose that the sexes have different cries.

The Pheasant is getting very numerous here, and breeds twice in the year. The Virginian Quail (*Ortyx virginianus*) also thrives well. No other birds have as yet been naturalized in this province. Our "Lark" (*Anthus novæ-seelandiæ*) has increased in numbers since the land was cleared. Our only migratory birds, two Cuckoos, arrive in October: one of them (*Eudynamis taitensis*) is a first-rate flier, often seen high in the air; the other (*Chrysococcyx lucidus*), although very common and constantly heard, both round Auckland and in the bush, is rarely seen, as it hides in the trees. Neither have a note like our Cuckoo; but, according to the natives, both lay eggs in other birds' nests.

The commonest birds in the bush about here are:—

Hieracidea novæ-zelandiæ.

Athene novæ-zelandiæ.

Halcyon vagans.

Prothemadera novæ-zelandiæ.

Certhiparus novæ-zelandiæ.

Rhipidura flabellifera.

Anthus novæ-seelandiæ.

Platycercus pacificus.

Nestor meridionalis.

Chrysococcyx lucidus (in summer).

Carpophaga novæ-seelandiæ.

Botaurus pœcilopterus.

Ocydromus australis.

Anas superciliosa, and four other species.

I hope ornithologists will give us no more "*Novæ-zelandiæ*;" we have *twelve* already!

In the winter the Kingfisher lives about the town, and often eats insects in the fields; the first bird I saw on landing was one in the barrack-square: now they are all by the river, breeding.

I am, &c.

F. W. HUTTON.

Kingsbury, Middlesex,
March 29, 1867.

SIR,—You may be interested to hear of a novel situation for a Stock-Dove's nest. The spire of the old village church here is a wooden one, and has for many a day given shelter to a loving couple of White Owls, and several pairs of Starlings, not

to mention the noisy Sparrows which have taken possession of the water-spouts.

During the summer of 1865, I frequently remarked a pair of Pigeons flying out from a good-sized hole at the base of the spire. They looked like Stock-Doves; but the scarcity of this species here in the breeding-season, as well as the unlikely situation which they had selected, caused me to think at the time that they could be only a pair of escaped "Blue Rocks." I could easily have shot one of the birds as it flew out, and thus settled the question, but I was anxious to prove something more.

An inspection of the interior of the church, which I unfortunately delayed until the summer was far advanced, showed that a nest, evidently a Pigeon's, had been built upon a cross beam above the bells. I was too late then for eggs; the young had flown. There was nothing for it, therefore, but to wait until the following spring, and then endeavour to secure a pair of young birds. Accordingly jotting down a memorandum in my note-book, and resolving to keep the fact of there being Pigeons in the church-spire to myself, I waited patiently for another nesting-season. My patience has been so far rewarded, that, after watching a pair of birds take up their quarters in the same site as that selected the previous year, and after several anxious visits of inspection, I was at length enabled, in July 1866, to carry off a pair of fine young pigeons, which were almost able to fly. The "coo" of the Stock-Dove is very peculiar, and by this time I had heard and seen enough of the birds in question to convince me that they belonged to this species.

Their young, which I had secured, after being fed for some time in a cage in the house, were transferred to my aviary. They are now in fine plumage, and have proved, as I suspected, to be undoubtedly the young of *Columba ænas*.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. EDMUND HARTING.

April 25, 1867.

SIR,—In the year 1860 I bought a specimen of *Hypotrionchis eleonoræ* from Mr. Jamrach. It was then in the immature

dress which so nearly resembles the adult plumage of *Hypotriorchis subbuteo*.

In the year 1861, a coloured drawing of this specimen was made for me by Mr. Wolf.

The bird continued very healthy until February 1867, when it died suddenly, being at the time in apparently good condition both as to flesh and plumage. It proved on dissection to be a male.

This specimen was, when it died, in almost entirely the same stage of plumage as when I purchased it, only differing from Mr. Wolf's drawing in the dark shaft-marks on the sternal and abdominal feathers being apparently rather longer and also somewhat broader and less defined on their lateral margins.

The tardiness of any change towards a fuliginous plumage in this specimen may have been due to its having been kept in confinement; but I think, nevertheless, that it is worth recording.

J. H. GURNEY.

Chislehurst, Kent,
May 12, 1867.

SIR,—In my "Notes on Birds collected in Tenasserim and the Andaman Islands" (P. Z. S. 1866, pp. 537–556), I pointed out certain characters in a specimen of a *Garrulax*, from Siam, which appeared sufficiently important to warrant me in regarding it as belonging to an undescribed species. Since then I have had the advantage of perusing M. Pucheran's admirable essay on the denti-rostral types contained in the Paris Museum. When reading the detailed description (Arch. du Mus. vii. p. 376. no. 37) given by that eminent zoologist of *Turdus diardi*, Lesson (Traité, p. 408), from Cochin China, I at once recognized the characters which led me to separate *G. leucogaster*, nob., from *G. leucolophus* (Hardw.) and *G. belangeri*, Less. M. Pucheran writes, "la tête est blanche, ainsi que le thorax et l'abdomen dans sa partie médiane" et "ses côtés de l'abdomen et les plumes couvrant le haut des tarses sont brun roux." In my description of the Siamese specimen (*l. c.* p. 548. no. 20), the words used are, "the entire under surface is white, the thigh covers and flanks only being rufous." M. Pucheran ends his

article thus —“ Je ne sache pas que cette espèce ait été décrite depuis l'époque à laquelle M. Lesson l'a dénommée pour la première fois ; mais il me semble qu'elle peut parfaitement s'isoler des espèces connues de *Garrulax* par le blanc de la partie médiane de son abdomen.”

Describing as new a previously described species is justly considered inexcusable. Yet, in this instance, if I have done so, this much may, I think, be urged in palliation : Lesson, who classed it as a *Turdus*, merely says “ tête et cou blancs.” In the next place, when, three years later (Bél. Voy. Zool. 1834, p. 258), he founded his genus *Garrulax*, enumerated the species he classed in it, and described the closely allied form, *G. belangeri*, he omitted all mention of *T. diardi* ; nor is this species to be found under *Garrulax* in Lesson's ‘ Compléments de Buffon,’ published in 1840.

Without actual comparison of the types I cannot positively affirm that the two belong to the same species. M. Pucheran does not mention the existence of a crest ; and this omission, taken together with the difference of origin, makes it possible that the Cochin-Chinese species does differ from the one inhabiting Siam.

I am yours obdt.

WALDEN.

London,

May 24.

SIR,—An adult female *Ciconia nigra*, in splendid plumage, was shot last week at Westacre in Norfolk. It had been living at and about the river for a week or more, and might very possibly have stayed longer.

I am, &c.

ANTHONY HAMOND, Jun.

16 The Grove,
Boltons, S.W.

SIR,—Mr. Selater has kindly forwarded me the following extract from Tchihatcheff's ‘ Voy. dans l'Altai,’ referring to *Cinclus leucogaster* (see *antea*, p. 118), taken from a copy of that work in the Library of the Athenæum Club :—

“ Tchihatcheff (Pierre de), ‘ Voyage Scientifique dans l'Altai

Oriental' (Paris, *Gide*, 1845), contains (p. 417) a contribution by Prof. Brandt, of St. Petersburg, entitled "Considérations sur les Animaux Vertébrés de la Sibérie Occidentale," the third section of which gives an "*Enumeratio animalium vertebratorum Siberiæ occidentalis*." In the list of birds, two species of *Cinclus* are given (p. 442), *Cinclus aquaticus*, Briss., and *C. leucogaster*, Eversm.; but no remarks on or description of either, further than the following paragraph (p. 460):—"Le genre *Cinclus* possède en Sibérie une espèce qui paraît lui être propre, et que Eversmann a désignée par le nom de *Cinclus leucogaster*. Au reste elle a déjà été signalée par M. Pallas comme une variété."

I am, &c.,

OSBERT SALVIN.

Dr. Hartlaub, writing to us lately from Bremen, says, repeating the information he gave to Mr. Gould:—

"I believe that the first original description of *Cinclus leucogaster* (Ibis, 1867, p. 118) was published by Eversmann in that part of the 'Addenda ad Zoographiam Rosso-Asiaticam,' of which the whole edition was destroyed by fire with the exception of a very few copies. *Cinclus leucocephalus* is also in the Bremen collection."

The two species of *Luscinia* from South Africa mentioned by Dr. Hartlaub (Ibis, 1867, p. 18) are surely *not* veritable Nightingales. They were originally described as *Luscinia* by Sundevall (Obs. in Levaill. Ois. d'Afr. p. 44), but come very near to *Erythropygia* and *Ruticilla*. '*Luscinia*' *sinuata* of Sundevall is congeneric with the 'Traquet familier' of Levaillant, which is in the Bremen Museum.

The fine general collection of bird-skins formed by the late lamented Hugh Edwin Strickland has recently been most liberally presented by his widow to the University of Cambridge, and will be lodged in the New Museum at that place, in the same room with the Swainsonian Collection, which was purchased by subscription in 1843, and given to the University. These two collections probably contain more type-specimens than are to be

found in any museum, with the exception of the British, in the United Kingdom; and we trust that the University authorities will lose no time in contriving that they shall be available for consultation and study by ornithologists generally. We learn also, by the last Annual Report of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, that the collection of British Birds formed by the late Arthur Strickland has been presented to the Society's Museum. This collection contains many interesting specimens, among them *Ardea alba* and *Puffinus major*, killed in England, to say nothing of a fine *Alca impennis*, of which last the Society already possessed a very fair example.

We have received from a friend who is well qualified to speak with certainty on the subject, the information that the *Tarsiger cucullatus*, Gould, described by Mr. Blyth in our pages a short time since (*suprà*, p. 16, note) is a species figured by Levaillant (Ois. d'Afr. pl. 157), and now known as *Pogonocichla stellata* (Vieill.). In 1850 it received another name from Prof. Sundevall, that of *P. margaritata*, as we learn from that naturalist himself in his critical remarks on Levaillant's work.

Mr. Swinhoe, from whom a long and interesting communication is unavoidably postponed to our next number, has recently informed us of the much-to-be-lamented death, at Hongkong, of Professor De Filippi, at the the age of fifty-three. This enterprising naturalist, whose travels in Persia we only a few months since had to record (*Ibis*, 1866, p. 414), sailed in the Italian frigate 'Magenta,' as the head of a scientific mission, on a voyage round the world, and had successfully reached China on his way to Australia. It is a satisfaction to know that our contributor, Signor Giglioli, so well known to many Englishmen from his residence some years since in London, also accompanied the expedition; so that our branch of science will be well taken care of. Professor De Filippi is said to have been deservedly popular among his own countrymen; and it is greatly to be regretted that a naturalist so able should have fallen a victim to the notoriously treacherous climate of our Chinese possession.